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**Connecticut General Assembly - Public Safety and Security Committee  
Public Hearing, February 21, 2013**

**House Bill No. 6374,  
An Act Concerning Coordinated Long-Term Disaster Relief and Recovery**

Testimony of:

**Michael A. Spera**  
**Chief of Police and Emergency Management Director**  
**Town of Old Saybrook**  
**And**

**Vice President, Connecticut Emergency Management Association**

Good morning. Representative Dargan, Senator Hartley, and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee; my name is Michael Spera and I am honored to be the Chief of Police and Emergency Management Director for the Town of Old Saybrook and Vice President of the Connecticut Emergency Management Association.

The Connecticut Emergency Management Association represents the interests of each municipal emergency management director in the State of Connecticut. Emergency Management Directors are responsible for the creation and maintenance of emergency operations plans and contingency planning in their respective communities. They are true partners in public safety and play a vital role on any local, regional, or state public safety leadership team.

I am here today to provide testimony in support of House Bill Number 6374, An Act Concerning Coordinated Long-Term Disaster Relief and Recovery. As you are aware, this bill would establish an endowment fund to provide a mechanism to collect and distribute private donations to meet municipal and individual needs when other funding sources, such as FEMA disaster aid, have been exhausted.

Despite the cause of the disaster the title of "victim" is shared by too many. Victims are individuals, families, businesses, private nonprofit organizations, school districts, and municipalities. This bill allows those who were not affected by disaster to help those who were by establishing a framework to do so. A framework that has established fiscal management controls, local leadership oversight, and streamlines the donation and distribution process when time truly matters.

The Connecticut Emergency Management Association is particularly pleased to see the role that municipalities and the emergency management community play in the proposed legislation. The proposed board of the CT CARE Fund includes the five local chairs of the DEMHS regional emergency planning teams (or REPTs), as well as the executive directors of CCM and COST and the State Emergency Management Director. Also, the Fund's proposed distribution committee, to be activated when a disaster has been designated by the Fund, will include the DEMHS regional coordinator for the region affected, as well as the chair of the DEMHS REPT, and the Chief Elected Officials of the municipalities affected.

The CT CARE Fund will enhance the assistance and support available to those negatively impacted by disaster. It is a positive step, fostered by State Government, to aid those in need of additional support in order to recover from disaster. The Connecticut Emergency Management Association strongly supports HB 6374.